Completion Report for Value Added Grant VA99-202

"Watering Systems to Promote Management Intensive Grazing"

This grant proposal, submitted by the Southeastern Indiana Forage and Livestock Association of Historic Hoosier Hills RC&D, Inc, was designed to purchase various types of watering equipment. The equipment would be made available to graziers throughout Indiana to demonstrate various ways of getting water to paddocks and pastures to help producers move into more intensive grazing management. Supplying water is frequently seen as the limiting factor that keep producers from going to more intensive grazing management even though they know it can result in more production per acre. The equipment would be demonstrated at four sites around the state and field days would be held to display the equipment to the public and promote better grazing management. We had also proposed to do a video, slide, or other visual program to be duplicated and made available to the Conservation Partnership and Extension field people as well as interested producers. The budget included funds for speakers and travel to accomplish these objectives.

As we moved into the implementation phase of the project, it became apparent that getting speakers was not a problem, and that money could be better used for equipment. Speakers were more than willing to travel and speak at their own expense. It also became apparent that there was great interest in the watering equipment, and that is why we asked for permission to move the funds from speakers and travel into the equipment budget.

The attached equipment sheet shows what we have been able to purchase with the Value-added Grant funds (Attachment #1). And the four field days we committed to do in the grant proposal have ended up being ten field days plus the State Fair, both in 2000 and 2001. There is also an attached sheet that highlights the field days where equipment was used and shown (Attachment #2). A copy of the poster used at the 2001 fair exhibit is attached (Attachment #3). An eleventh field day is mentioned because, although it won't take place until after this report is filed, it is the farm where the trailer-mounted solar-powered watering system has been located all season.

We did decide not to charge the graziers for use of the equipment. It would be cumbersome trying to keep track of that over the state, and we found the users have to spend their own money and time anyway to hook the equipment up, so we considered that as their investment in the project.

We did not get the visual presentation done, although we also did not use all of the grant funds. We did purchase a digital video camera that has been used to video some of the equipment and some of the field days. We have a commitment from USDA-NRCS to put onto CD's any program that we develop from this project. Additionally, Victor Shelton, Grazing Specialist for NRCS, has developed a PowerPoint presentation that will be used for winter programs, etc. once it has the finishing touches put to it.

The grant was for $15,400 and we received $11,550 initially. We used all but $308.53 which is refunded with this report. We actually spent $11,241.47, which is accounted for

on the attached Quickbooks report (Attachment #4). The sheet explaining the match is also attached (Attachment #5).

The strength of this project is that it is not over because the funding has run out, but the fact that it is just getting a good start. We purchased additional nose pumps and water meters just before the grant expired and haven't had time to get all of the nose pumps out yet. A few are kept in NRCS and Extension Agronomy staff vehicles to have with them at all times to explain and display. This program will go on for several years, as long as the equipment lasts. It will stay in the ownership of Historic Hoosier Hills and the Southeastern Indiana Forage and Livestock Association as the primary non-profit organization sponsoring the project. But the equipment will continue to be used statewide by Extension and NRCS staff and put to work on producers farms to help the forage and livestock producers make more efficient use of their grasslands, improve the pounds per acre produced, and improve their "bottom line".